

Coverage:

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Disregard for Data

It isn't uncommon to hear that our details are being lost and stolen in breach of the Data Protection Act. The question is whether our data is being sold on to data houses and call centres to be used as potential customer leads.

Negligence towards data leaves the public susceptible to scams, cold calls and even ID theft. It is a scary prospect knowing that we have no control over some of our data. 70% of phone owners claim that they have been victim of a phone scam during the last twelve months. While irritating for the majority, the problem becomes intensified for the elderly who report a greater anxiety and dismay caused by unsolicited calls.

It isn't surprising that consumers are urging authorities to ban cold calling entirely, with over a quarter of customers claiming to feel intimidated, according to consumer group Which?

Accounts have emerged that companies and government organisations such as hospitals, schools and police forces are frequently leaving CD's and documents at various locations like bus stops, with some being discarded, snooped upon and even stolen.

Mick Gorrill, Head of Enforcement at the ICO, said: "Any organisation collecting and holding personal information needs to ensure that information is kept and disposed of safely and securely. This is an important principle of the Act. Making sure data is disposed of securely and not keeping information for longer than is necessary can help to prevent information falling into the wrong hands. Staff need to be aware of policies and it is essential they receive appropriate training to follow them."

If organisations continue to use our data in this way, unfortunately there is no other alternative to turn to. However, CPR Global is a service designed to eliminate nuisance calls to householders. They act on behalf of their customers to tackle the calls at the root of the problem with the data companies.

Companies who are gathering their information through illegal methods like stolen data can only be tackled by CPR Global's rigorous process that comprises of personal investigations that no other anti-nuisance service provider can offer. Other than individually chasing up complaints, there is no alternative way of ensuring that customers will not be contacted in this way again. Other bodies refuse to follow up individual complaints because it proves to be far too costly.

Usually by simply registering with the service it does prevent the calls, although there are always going to be companies who refuse to comply with legislations. This is where CPR Global can help by contacting each offending company to personally ensure that they take our customers details off their lists together with a written confirmation letter.

Under the Privacy and Electronic Communications (EC Directive) Regulations 2003, it is unlawful to make unsolicited marketing calls to individuals who have expressed their wish not to receive such calls.

Customers of CPR Global rate the service as the fifth most trusted service that they turn to after the police, the ambulance, the fire brigade and road side assistance. There's always someone to speak to and many are taking advantage of this, with customers calling for advice on the legitimacy of certain companies. Staff also report that elderly customers are calling when they're feeling vulnerable, which our friendly advisors are always happy to help with.

Customers can relax knowing that three telephone lines are protected, whether it's at work, home or even mobiles, they can rest assured that the family is covered wherever they are. For £39.75, CPR Global is available for its customers throughout the year. Those who are experiencing nuisance calls should consider registering their details with CPR Global by calling freephone 0800 652 7780 or by visiting www.callpreventionregistry.com.

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